

Institutional updates

Transforming livelihoods in South Asia through sustainable livestock research and development

On 13 and 14 November 2018, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) convened a regional meeting with partners from Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Together with ILRI senior staff and scientists, the participants, from public and private institutions, reviewed country development outcomes, agricultural priorities and constraints and potential contributions of the livestock sector in the region. They identified issues and problems that could be tackled through sustainable livestock-related research for development in four priority areas: dairy development, goat development, feed and forage development and animal health.

Drawing on the desired outcomes and challenges faced, participants identified promising livestock research for development (LR4D) interventions and drafted nine initial project ideas in the four priority areas:

- South Asia dairy sector development
- Sustainable development of goat farmers through enhanced productivity and value
- Climate-smart, high-yielding and nutritive forages for South Asia
- Interactive feed supply demand tools for South Asia
- Community-based hill and rangeland management for sustainable livestock production in South Asia
- Increased availability of affordable off-farm produced feed in South Asia
- Utilizing and enriching crop residues and unconventional feed resources in South Asia
- Assessing the factors affecting the success of transboundary animal disease vaccination programs
- Developing a pen-side/point of care test for PPR in sheep and goats



Jimmy Smith, ILRI's director general, speaking at the opening of the workshop (photo credit: ILRI).

These project ideas will be used as a basis for further collaboration to formulate concrete proposals for research activities in the region. They will be supported by stepped-up regional investor intelligence and engagement supported by ILRI globally and through its South Asia regional office.

New agreement on exploring cooperation in livestock research for development in Bangladesh

Alongside the aforementioned regional meeting, Jimmy Smith, director general of ILRI, and Nathu Ram Sarkar, director general of the Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute (BLRI), signed a memorandum of understanding on 13 November 2018 to undertake collaborative livestock research for development to enhance the economic status of smallholders in the country.



Village milk collector in Bangladesh (photo credit: ILRI/Liz Waithanji).



Welcome note

Welcome to the second edition of ILRI's South Asia newsletter!

This newsletter is meant to share key updates of ILRI's activities in South Asia with stakeholders, partners and donors.

I hope you will enjoy reading it and thank you for your strong support to ILRI South Asia.

Learn more about our work at www.asia.ilri.org. If you have any feedback please contact ilri-delhi@cgiar.org

Habibar Rahman
Regional representative for
ILRI South Asia

Release of diagnostic kits for Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever

On 29 November 2017 Soumya Swaminathan, deputy director general of the World Health Organization and former director general of the, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and Habibar Rahman, ILRI regional representative for South Asia, released the diagnostic kits for Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF) that are instrumental in diagnosing the disease, which has claimed several lives in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The kits were developed by National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune for CCHF and Japanese Encephalitis (JE) and marketed by Zydus Cadila.



From left: Rahman Habibar (first) and Soumya Swaminathan (second) release the diagnostic kits for Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (photo credit: ILRI).

ILRI delegation at global event on ending hunger and malnutrition

A senior delegation from ILRI joined a global conference on 'Accelerating the end of hunger and malnutrition' in Bangkok on 28–30 November 2018. The event provided a platform to accelerate the sharing of existing knowledge, approaches and tools that have led to success in many countries, so others can learn, adapt and accelerate their own work to reduce hunger and malnutrition in sustainable ways.



Livestock can contribute to the achievement of many Sustainable Development Goals (photo credit: ILRI/Susan MacMillan).

ILRI programs featured at a national meeting on pathogenomics

The Department of Biotechnology in the Ministry of Science and Technology, India, organized a meeting on pathogen genomics brainstorming in New Delhi on 19 November 2018, where Habibar Rahman, ILRI regional representative for South Asia, highlighted major research programs by ILRI in India and South Asia including those working towards the development of vaccines for diseases like African swine fever, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP), contagious caprine pleuropneumonia (CCPP) and Rift Valley fever.



Habibar Rahman (second right) highlighted ILRI research programs at a national meeting on pathogenomics (photo credit: ILRI).

South Asia meeting on animal breeding policies and strategies

Habibar Rahman, ILRI regional representative for South Asia, attended the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) meeting on 'Animal breeding policies and strategies for the genetic improvement of indigenous animal resources' that was hosted by the Nepal Government on 10–14 April 2018. SAARC has taken initiatives to intensify the program in different priority areas of the country. At the meeting, Rahman highlighted an ILRI-Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) collaborative project on buffalo genomics that has been undertaken in India to enhance the productivity of indigenous buffalo for small-scale and marginalized farmers.



Buffaloes at a traditional homestead in the Himalayan foothills of northern India (photo credit: ILRI/Susan MacMillan).

Reviewing impacts of a livestock program in Nepal

In late November 2019, a meeting was organized by the Livestock System Innovation Lab (LSIL) under the US

Government's initiative of Feed the Future to review LSIL's research impacts in Nepal. About 35 people attended the meeting representing various stakeholder groups, both public and private, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Nepal, the Department of Livestock Services of Nepal, Nepal Dairy and related stakeholders. V Padmakumar, ILRI livestock specialist, presented the Agricultural Sustainability Assessment Toolkit (ASAT) that is designed by USAID to provide a qualitative appraisal of an innovation's scalability and facilitated group discussion to identify pathways of scaling.



A Nepalese dairy farmer at her milk cooperative building (photo credit: ILRI/Stevie Mann).

Project news

Enhancing livestock feed project in Odisha

ILRI delegates met Shri Ratnakara Rout, director, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Odisha, in a visit late December 2018 to discuss the progress of the 'Feed and Fodder Production in different Agroclimatic zones and its Utilization for Livestock of Odisha' project which is funded by the government of Odisha through its Fisheries and Animal Resource Development Department. The delegates including Habibar Rahman, ILRI regional representative for South Asia and ILRI scientists Vijayalakshmy Kennady and Braja Bandhu Swain visited different project locations where the modern technologies in livestock management and new varieties of fodder crops developed by ILRI has been adopted. They also met Laxmi Narayan Mohanty, block veterinary officer, who requested ILRI to initiate a small fodder demonstration unit in the backyard of the Veterinary Dispensary Unit for farmers visiting the dispensary.



ILRI delegates advise Indian farmers on the importance of fodder cultivation for improved livestock production (photo credit: ILRI).



Fodder cultivation at a farmers' field (CO25- Fodder variety demonstrated by ILRI) (photo credit: ILRI).

Capacity development

Open Data Kit (ODK) installation on tablet usage at ICAR-CIRB

ILRI jointly organized a three-day hands-on ODK training with the ICAR-Central Institute of Research on Buffaloes (CIRB) on open data kit (ODK) use on tablets, ODK configuration and use and ODK forms review, data processing and extraction on 8–17 October 2018. About 20 participants from various field units, field in-charges and associated data recorders/field workers (four from National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal; 10 from Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences (GADVASU), Ludhiana and 6 from CIRB, Hisar) attended the training.



Participants of the training on ODK installation on tablets at ICAR-CIRB, Hisar (photo credit: ILRI).

Training program on analytical veterinary epidemiology to better control diseases in India

Scientists from ILRI and ICAR have trained more than 20 researchers from ICAR's institutes, state agricultural universities and state animal husbandry departments on epidemiology concepts, data analysis and different frameworks for risk analysis and risk management that could improve disease control and prevention in India. The training was held 3–5 December 2018 and co-hosted by the National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology and Disease Informatics (ICAR-NIVEDI), the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (ICAR-IVRI) and ILRI. The training was organized around such factors as the multidisciplinary nature of epidemiology, recent developments in information technology and bio-informatics, the emergence of new diseases, climate change and multi-level analysis. Johanna

Lindahl and Elizabeth Cook, senior scientists at ILRI, and Sheik Hossain, a former expert from the Center for Diseases Control and Prevention also explained trainees risk assessment tools that would be used for risk analysis, management and communication.



Release of certificates for participants in the analytical veterinary epidemiology training (photo credit: ILRI)

Awards/recognition

1. **Habibar Rahman**, ILRI regional representative for South Asia has been granted an Indian Patent for development of a novel vaccine on salmonellosis.
2. **Vijayalakshmy Kennady**, ILRI technical officer has been awarded 'J. P. Mittal Best M.V.Sc Thesis Award' for her research work.
3. **Roma Oli**, ILRI administrative officer has received a long-service award from the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).



Roma Oli, ILRI administrative officer receives the long-service award from ICRISAT (photo credit: ILRI).



The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works to improve food and nutritional security and reduce poverty in developing countries through research for efficient, safe and sustainable use of livestock. Co-hosted by Kenya and Ethiopia, it has regional or country offices and projects in East, South and Southeast Asia as well as Central, East, Southern and West Africa. ilri.org



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Animal scientist, Nobel Prize Laureate for Physiology or Medicine–1996

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